



*The Redeemer's near Relation to his People,
their great Comfort and peculiar
Privilege.*

A
S E R M O N,

Occasion'd by the Death of

Mrs. Mary Weare,

P R E A C H ' D

January the 5th. 172 $\frac{3}{4}$.

By *EDWARD WALLIN.*

L O N D O N :

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T O

Mrs. *Catharine Jocelyn,*

DAUGHTER OF

Sir STRANGE JOCELYN, Bart.

O F

HYDE HALL,

I N T H E

County of HERTFORD

(who, with others, hath occasioned this publication) this plain discourse is humbly offer'd by,

MADAM,

Your sincere Friend and Servant,

EDWARD WALLIN.

T O

His Chinese Journal

By

Mr. J. H. R. H. H. H.

W. D. H. H.

Country of H. H. H.

(Also with a list of the
collections of the
Museum)



MADAM

THE

THE

A FUNERAL
SERMON, &c.

ISAIAH, chap. liv. ver. 5.

For thy maker is thine husband (the Lord of hosts is his name) and thy redeemer the holy one of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall be called.



AM to address you at this time on account of the death of one, who, I have no reason to doubt, is now triumphing above, among the happy *spirits of just men made perfect*, in the presence and sweet enjoyment of her dear exalted Redeemer. The words which I have read had been often blest'd to the comfort of her own mind, for which reason I have been desired to make them the subject of my present discourse.

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In order to give a plain view of them, it will be needful to observe, that this evangelical prophet *Isaiah* is for many reasons reckoned one of the most eminent among all those, who were sent to deliver the mind of the Lord to his people ; and was particularly employed to deal in the closest manner with the *Jews* for their repeated transgressions of the divine law, especially for their notorious ingratitude towards *the holy one of Israel*. And as he enumerates many of their wicked practices, and, in the name of the Lord, denounceth heavy judgments against them ; so among other things he plainly prophesies of the Lord's giving them up into the hand of the *Assyrians*, *Israel's* avowed enemies ; and foretels their being carried by them captive to *Babylon*. *

But that the hearts of those few faithful among them, who had not given into those abominations, which the generality were guilty of, might not fail in the common calamity ; nor sink under that evil treatment, they should meet with during the time of their captivity : he is made to prophesy against *Babylon*, and shew its sad and certain destruction. *And Babylon the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.* † And to assure them of this, and of the church's deliverance hereby, God by his prophet names the
very

* Chap. 5, and 8. 4. † Chap. 13. 19.

very person, whom he would raise up and strengthen to accomplish this deliverance of his people from *Babylon*; and who, as his instrument, he would appoint to repeople *Judea* and *Jerusalem*, and rebuild the temple there, and restore all those vessels of the sanctuary, which *Nebuchadnezzar* should carry with the people, to *Babylon*. *

The gates of brass, which are spoken of, chapter 45. v. 2. *I will go before thee, and make crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron:* refer to the city of *Babylon*, which was built four square, and had 25 of these gates of brass in each square, in which much of the beauty, as well as strength of the city consisted. Now *Cyrus*, the founder of the *Persian* empire, who was thus named by the Lord 150 years before his birth, to rescue the *Israelites* from the *Babylonish* yoke, when he came against it, found those gates leading to the river open, which for the security of the city were generally kept shut; and by that means he had an easy entrance. † Which perfectly agrees with the account here given by the prophet, and was a good step towards the accomplishment of those other things, which, it was said, he should do for God; in regard of that deliverance his people were to

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enjoy

* Chap. 44. 28. and 45. 1. † See Priccaux's *Conn. T.* p. 1, b. 2. p. 121, 131.

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enjoy thro' him, as an instrument, from the oppression of their enemies.

Hence we may observe, that as the Lord provides long before hand for the deliverance of his people from such as oppress them ; so when the appointed time comes, nothing shall hinder the accomplishment of his sovereign pleasure.

But *Isaiah's* prophecies go much farther than this, and extend to things of a superior nature. For 'tis plain from divers parts of this book, that this prophet is led to look into gospel times, and comfort the church with a prospect of a much greater than *Cyrus*, who should appear to deliver his people from a far worse bondage and captivity, than what *Israel* suffered in *Babylon*. And therefore, refering to Christ, whom he stiles the *Lord God*, he shews them, this great deliverer should in their behalf conquer death itself, and in the end wipe away all tears from his true *Israel*. * *He will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces, and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth : for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo this is our God, we have waited for him, and he shall save us ; this is the Lord we have waited for him, we will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation.* To much the same purpose is that passage in *Hosea*: *I will ransom them from the*
power

* Isa. 25. 8, 9,

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power of the grave, I will redeem them from death, O death I will be thy plagues, O grave I will be thy destruction : repentance shall be hid from mine eyes. * Both which passages correspond with those words of the apostle to the Corinthians : So when this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality ; then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory. †

And besides this, he declares also the very sum of the gospel, which Christ and his apostles should preach in that day. *The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, &c. ‡.* Which words are refer'd to by Christ in Luke : *The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. §*

And the better to set forth the flourishing state of the church in that day, in chap. 35. as also in several other places, he directly prophesies of the calling of the Gentiles, and the abundant
success

* Chap. 13. 14. † 1 Cor. 15. 54. ‡ Chap. 61. 1. to 4.
§ Chap. 4. 18, 19.

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success which should attend the promulgation of the gospel. And having in chapter 53. insisted largely on the humiliation and sufferings of Christ, and shewn the occasion and end of them, together with many of the blessed consequences which result from thence to his church and people ; he comes in this 54 *chapter* to apply those things for the comfort and joy of all true *Israelites*. And as this prophet by faith, like *Abraham*, rejoiced in this prospect himself, long before the day of Christ, and the happy state of the church appeared in the world ; so he calls upon all the faithful to rejoice with him. *Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear ; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travel with child, &c.**

Some have thought this argument began at *chapter* 52. and that after some interruption it is here resumed ; but most apprehend it intirely independent of the former, and a new declaration of glorious things then in reserve for spiritual *Israel* ; especially as to the enlargement of the church by the addition of great numbers to her, and her continuance in a prosperous state.

By *barren* here some think we are to understand the church and state of the *Jews*, who by reason of their captivity in *Babylon* seem'd, as it were, like a widow, or solitary woman, without hope of children ; and that therefore the church, after the deliverance

* *Chap.* 54. 1.

deliverance of the *Jews* from their captivity, is brought in wondering at the increase of her numbers. ††

But others, tho' they do not intirely reject this interpretation respecting the *Jews*, yet think it may be much better understood of the *Gentiles*, who had been hitherto wholly barren, and brought forth no fruit to God. Which seems plain also from these words: *Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people, and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.* * But if neither sense may be excluded, it plainly appears that the prosperity of the *Jewish* church, after her deliverance from *Babylon*, may be considered as typical of the great success of the gospel in the conversion both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*. And that the *Gentiles* are herein intended, is, I think, confirm'd by what follows, where 'tis said: *Thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles.* † And the apostle to the *Galatians* quotes this very passage in the same sense: *For it is written: Rejoyce, thou barren, that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not; for the desolate hath many more children, than she which hath an husband.* § Then he goes on: *More are the children of the desolate, than the children*

†† Chap. 49. 21. * Chap. 49. 22. † Chap. 54. 3.
§ Chap. 4. 27.

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dren of the married wife. * That is, either literally, the *Jewish* church shall be more flourishing after her deliverance from captivity, than she was before; or spiritually: which sense, I must confess, I rather chuse; that the church of God shall by the calling in of the *Gentiles* be greater, and far more glorious, than it had been in the best state of the *Jews*.

If we take that expression, *verse 3. Thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles*: in a literal sense only, to signify no more, than that his people should after their return from *Babylon* considerably enlarge their borders, and (as history assures us in process of time they did) carry their dominion into some parts of *Moab*, *Edom* and *Syria*, agreeable to that promise of God made to *Abraham*: *Thy seed shall possess the gates of his enemy*:† I say, if we bound the meaning of the prophet here, and can be satisfied with this view of the words; alas! what a glorious prospect are we deprived of? What faint shadows are these of that great inheritance, which Christ, and with him his church, were to have from the multitudes of converts, which by the preaching of the gospel were to be brought in from all parts of the world? according to that of *Isaiah*: *Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul*
unto

* *Verse 1.* † *Gen. 22. 17.*

unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors *.

Besides, the magnificent and glorious things hereafter spoken of, and promised in this *chapter*, so vastly exceed the condition of the *Jews* at that time (who, according to the best light history affords, were oppressed with such a variety of troubles, distractions, and calamities, as could no ways agree with that tranquillity, which is here promised to the Church) that it seems absolutely necessary to refer this passage to the times of the Gospel; in which all, that is here said is, or will be fulfilled. And therefore, as the foregoing *chapter* does directly and literally speak of Christ; this literally speaks of the Church of Christ, or the kingdom of the Messiah. And so the ancient *Hebrew* doctors understood it §.

This view of the whole, I apprehend, was in some measure needful, in order to put the text, and the design of the Lord by it, in a plain and useful light.

The metaphors made use of in the foregoing *verses* to set forth the comfortable state of *Zion*, according to the prophet's view of it, might be profitably handled, would our time permit. But I

* Chap. 53. 12.

§ See *Pool's* Annot. on this place.

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must proceed to the words themselves, which are plainly brought in by way of encouragement to God's *Israel*. *Thy maker is thy husband (the Lord of hosts is his name) and thy redeemer the holy one Israel, the God of the whole earth shall he be called.*

Whoever considers the connection of these words, with what goes before, will easily see, they are designed to comfort the Church, and every true believer, under any sorrowful circumstance whatever; and to strengthen the faith of God's people in him, according to all the promises and prophecies relating to his grace and favour towards them, and their true and real happiness thereby.

In order to these two great ends, our text contains two sorts of arguments.

First, Such as arise from what the Lord is in himself, *viz.*

1. The Lord of hosts.
2. The God of the whole earth.

Secondly, Such as arise from the particular relations, in which he stands to his people, As

1. He is their maker, that is, he hath created or formed them to be his people. As in *Isaiah* xliii.

2 I.

2. The holy one of *Israel*.
3. Their redeemer.
4. He sustains the relation of an husband to all his people.

Now

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Now as 'tis evident, that the prophet in the preceding *chapter* had been speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ and his sufferings, in order to complete the redemption and salvation of his people ; and comes in this to apply the doctrines he had delivered, to assist their faith and joy : so in the text he describes the person he had been speaking of, as to the excellency of his nature, *the holy one* ; the excellency of his power and working, *the Lord of hosts, the God of the whole earth, the maker and redeemer of Israel* ; and also by mentioning that endearing relation of *an husband*, in which this great and glorious Lord stands to all his people. From whence I conclude, that the person thus characterized in the text is the Lord Jesus Christ, or the second person in the glorious Trinity, eminently stiled *the son of God*. This is he, as I observed, of whom the prophet had been particularly treating, and to whom all these characters in the text properly belong, as might be shewn at large. And 'tis he who has also graciously condescended, for the comfort of his people, to declare their nearness to him ; and assure them of his constant love to, and pleasure in them, under this delightful and familiar relation.

This lovely character of our Lord Redeemer seems to stand first in the prophet's view, and is here mentioned with a particular emphasis to increase the faith and consolation of his people. And the several other characters appear as so many arguments, in-

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troduced to confirm their minds in the belief, that he could not but answer in every respect all things they could possibly desire of him, or whatever might be conceived to be included in the near and engaging relation of a husband.

And as in this among men we find every thing answered, that is desirable, or that can be expected from every other relation; and one justly deserving this character will make it his endeavour to supply the deficiency of all the rest (which our departed friend found by experience) therefore the Scripture mentions our Lord's standing in this relation to his people, with design that every believer might constantly and comfortably expect from Christ's hand all that in perfection, which is naturally comprised under this relative term among men.

This was the view in which this portion of Scripture was at several seasons of singular advantage to the deceased; and will appear so to others, as the divine Spirit gives understanding; it being eminently adapted to yeild support to the faith, and suitable comfort to the minds of all true christians under their different troubles.

In treating upon the words thus explained I shall,

- I. Inquire what is implied in this relation, wherein Christ stands to his people, which has

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has such a natural tendency to increase their faith and joy.

II. Shew the ground or reason, which his people have to depend upon his answering to them all that is thus included under this relation of a husband.

III. Make proper improvement of the whole.

I. In the first place we are to consider some things, which are implied in this relation, wherein Christ stands to his people, that naturally tend to encourage their faith and joy in him. And,

1. This relation carries in it, or intimates that nearness and union, which there is between Christ and his church. Among men the marriage union is the nearest and most strict of any, that can possibly be. And because there is no higher allusion, whereby to express the union of believers to Christ, the Holy Ghost useth this to give us the more lively apprehension of this admirable privilege in the *Epistle to the Ephesians*: *For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.* * The words refer to those of *Adam* at his first reception and welcome of *Eve*, when he thus speaks of her : *This is now bone of my bones, and flesh*

* Chap. 5. 30.

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*flesh of my flesh.** And when the apostle describes the union between husband and wife, he saith : *And these two shall be one flesh.* § And immediately he applies it to the happy union between Christ and his church, saying : *This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and his church.* † And indeed, as the bridegroom and bride are one by a conjugal union, so are Christ and his church one by a spiritual and mystical union. For the apostle tells us, that *he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.* **

This spiritual and vital union is again represented, as to its nearness and influence, by the union of the vine and branches : that as the branches are in the vine, and derive all their virtue and beauty from the stock ; so believers are in Christ, and have communion with him in his fulness by being thus united to him, and by that means are made to grow and flourish in faith and fruitfulness.

And this indeed is what Christ intimates himself, when he saith : *I am the vine, ye are the branches.* †† So that this union between the heavenly bridegroom and believers is not a mere fiction of the brain, or an enthusiastic notion, as some men would fain represent it ; but that which
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* Gen. 2. 23. § Eph. 5. 32. † v. 33. ** 1. Cor. 6. 17. †† John 15. 5.

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is real, and founded on scripture authority. And whatever is absolutely necessary to enable any person to bring forth fruit unto God (let men have what notions they please of their natural and acquired abilities) all must be received from him. And accordingly he, in whom all our spiritual fruit is found, has himself said, that *as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in me:* * which at once shews the reality of the believer's union with Christ, and the necessity of it in order to fruitfulness.

I might add, that as this union between Christ and believers is real, even as that between husband and wife, and in that respect is comfortable; so 'tis much more excellent both in its nature and duration, as being eternal. This heavenly husband hates *putting away*, notwithstanding the many affronts and injuries offered him by the best of those, whom he hath betrothed.

And thus we see the near and comfortable union implied in this relation. And, indeed, such is this union between Christ and his people, that the nearness of the vine and branches, head and members, husband and wife, are but faint resemblances of it.

2. In this relation of a husband is implied the greatest love and tenderest affection. This is the proper

* John 15. 4.

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proper result of union, and is naturally supposed in the relation here mentioned. Hence the apostle, setting forth the duty of husbands to love their wives, has these expressions : *So ought men to love their wives, as their own bodies ; he that loveth his own wife, loveth himself ; and no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church.* * Which shews, that as love to ourselves is natural and necessary, and a great deal is required in the relation of a husband ; so the highest measure of it, with its sweetest effects and fruits, is certainly found in Christ towards his spouse. And therefore the church's spiritual husband, who has given the most convincing proofs of his love, that possibly could be, is recommended as a perfect pattern to all such as stand in that relation. *Husbands love your wives, as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it.* †

The greatness and continuance of this love and affection, which Christ bears to his people under this character, are very beautifully express'd in *Hosea*: *I will betroth thee unto me for ever ; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness and mercy ; I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord.* § And farther, to set forth this love in the most advantageous manner it is added immediately

* Eph. 5. 28. 29. † Eph. 5. 25. § Chap. 2. 19. 20

ately after our text : *I have called the as a wife of youth* : that is, with the strongest and most endearing affection; declaring that *as a bridegroom rejoyceth over the bride, so he will rejoyce over his people.** His ardent and unfeigned love has been manifested indeed to the wonder both of angels and men.

'Twas this dear love to his church, which he had espoused to himself before all time, that brought him down from his father's bosom, and made him submit to be nailed to the cross, and become a curse for them, to bleed and dye for their sins. Herein is love indeed : *For greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend.*† And thus, as the relation supposeth the truest and tenderest affection and love; the perfection of it is to be met with in the church's or true believer's spiritual husband. Let us pray therefore, that *we may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of this love of Chirst.* §
But,

3. This relation implies the utmost care and concern. These naturally arise from love and union. What a man's affections are knit to, and he has chosen for his own, necessarily engages his

* Isa. 62. 5. † John 15. 13. § Eph. 3. 18.

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care. And as this relation includes in it love and choice; any person must forfeit all pretensions to this character, so far as he comes short, or is deficient in this part for his spouse's welfare. Now these are much much more eminently found in the church's spiritual husband, than they can be imagin'd in the best of those who bear that character among men. This is very comfortably express'd by the apostle *Peter*: *Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.** And indeed as he has already taken care to redeem them from wrath to come, and procure for all his people *an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved for them in heaven.* † So now he takes care, as a tender husband, who is to remove his spouse to a new habitation, to prepare those mansions for her; and at the same time prepare her likewise for the full enjoyment of his presence in them. For it is by the fresh effusions of his grace, that believers are made actually meet to be partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light. †

'Tis this dear redeemer, who takes that care of such as are espoused to him, as to provide all things necessary for them, both with regard to life and godliness, whatever may be their thoughts of some of his dispensations towards them.

* 1 epist. 5. 7. † 1 Pet. 1. 4. § Col. 1. 12.

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Besides, as his people have here many enemies, both within and without, and on this account meet with many perplexities in their way to him ; he takes care of them under all difficulties of this kind. Agreeable to that of the apostle: *There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man ; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.** If Satan therefore, their restless and implacable adversary, accuse them before the throne ; he takes care to implead him, and cast out all his accusations. If he be permitted to sift them with temptations *as wheat*, he takes care *that their faith shall not fail*. If sin, that grievous enemy within, or wicked men from without rise up, and turn their rage and fury upon them : he sees to it, that the one *shall not have dominion over them* ; nor the other, notwithstanding their malice and cunning, succeed so far as, to be able to destroy those whom he has espoused.

To this purpose the scripture tells us, that *his eyes are over the righteous, and his ears open to their cries*, † His eyes are much more watchful over his beloved church, which is his *fulness*, than the eyes of any can be over their bags of gold and silver, who watch them with the utmost diligence, as that

* 1 Cor. 10. 13.

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wherein consists their highest pleasure and only happiness. And when in adversity, his eyes are upon them; as the eye of the refiner is upon his richest metal, when he is melting it down, in order to refine and purge it from that dross which is mixed with it, and abates its value and lustre. And this allusion the prophet makes use of, when he saith: *He sits as a refiner and purifier of silver.** Which doubtless denotes his extraordinary care and watchfulness, that none be lost or damaged in those various trials and afflictions they pass thro' here. And to shew the extensiveness of this care in the church's bridegroom, we are told in the *Chronicles*, that *the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of all them, whose hearts are perfect towards him.†* O! how delightful must this be to poor trembling believers under their trouble, to remember that they have such an husband in heaven, as careth for them in all concerns, whether of a temporal or spiritual nature!

4. A fourth thing, implied in this relation of a husband, is the utmost pity and sympathy, which can be desired in such a relative towards his spouse in a time of affliction and distress. And there is something in this, where it is discovered to be

* Mal. 3. 3. † 2 Chr. 16. 9.

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truly real and hearty, so exceeding agreeable and lovely, that we find many other defects for the sake of this one endearing quality frequently overlook'd. Where this is wanting on proper occasions, there appears little humanity, with scarce any thing of the husband, or indeed the christian, let the person's profession be never so great. And as union of persons in natural or civil concerns necessarily supposes this, so it is eminently true with regard to Christ, and such as he hath betrothed to himself. And 'tis matter of singular comfort to the church under every adverse circumstance, that among the many other valuable qualities, which are to be found in this their spiritual husband, this of sympathy and uncommon regard is very considerable. For to the comfort of the church it is said: *As a father pitieth his children, so doth the Lord pity them that fear him*: that is, them that love him.* For fear in the old testament, and love in the new, are frequently used to signify the same thing.

Agreeable to this the prophet *Isaiah*, in mentioning many particulars of the loving kindness of the Lord towards his people, has these words: *In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, † &c.* So the apostle

* Pf. 103. 13. † Chap. 63. 9.

James:

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James : The Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy. * And in like manner the author to the *Hebrews*, that he might recommend to the best advantage the preference of the christian religion to the *Jewish*, expresses himself thus: *We have not an high priest, who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, † &c.* As tho' he had said: "We have an high priest, who by reason of the perfection of his human nature, and the variety of his sufferings, is both morally and naturally capable to exercise pity towards his people in all cases of distress and affliction." Dr. *Owen* observes that the word συμπάσσειν, is variously rendered; sometimes to suffer, at other times to suffer with, to have compassion, to be touched with a feeling, to be affected with, to condole, or mourn over. § And in another place he observes, that during the time of our trials Christ has a real motion of affections in his holy nature.

And indeed the apostle seems to make this exercise of pity one principal end in our Lord's view, in going thro' his many trials and sufferings; and speaks of it as what was to fit him, and render him every way suitable for this great and gracious end. For, he says, in that he himself has suffered being tempted, he is able or fitted to succour them that are tempted.** So that, as I

* Chap. 5. 11.

† Heb. 4. 15.

§ *Owen in Loc.*

** Heb. 2. 18.

said before, there is the greatest reason for such, as are espoused to Christ, to depend upon having proper pity express'd towards them under their different pressures here. But,

5. Another thing intimated, or indeed assured by this relation, is the having all convenient supplies, which are in the power of a tender husband to give. And this undoubtedly is a consideration of no small comfort to the children of God. Union and love assure this, and it is a natural consequence of care and sympathy. This is a duty implanted in nature, and what the law of nations lays us under the strictest obligations to discharge. And that man, who to his ability makes no provision for his wife, is no longer worthy the character of an husband. For to use the apostle's words: *He that provides not for his own, that is, takes no care for their necessary support, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.**

Now under this character the Lord represents himself as the provider for his people. One that looks to it, that the real wants of all those, who truly depend upon him, be constantly and suitably supplied out of his exceeding fulness. He is infinitely wise, and so perfectly well knows what is needful and proper for every one of his family, to fill up that station which his providence

* 1 Tim. 5. 8.

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has allotted them here; and then his love and unmerited favour engage him freely to do for them *abundantly above* and beyond what they can possibly *ask or think*.^{*} And we may be sure that he who has planted this care in our very nature and has enjoined it upon us as our indispensable duty, certainly will never himself fail in the discharge of it. And indeed the least fear or hesitation in this matter is a slur and dishonour on the spiritual husband, and betrays a weakness very much unbecoming the christian character. Christ, like an elder brother, or the first born under the law, possesseth the inheritance; but it is with the intent to supply the wants of the whole family: dealing out, like another *Joseph*, necessary provisions to his father's family in every time of need. Nor can this be doubted, if we consider,

6. *Lastly*, That the relation of an husband gives his spouse a right to share with him in every thing that is properly his. No real or pretended inequality that their might be before marriage, can now hinder it. 'Tis an essential part of the civil contract among us. Nor can the wife's title be alienated, as long as the relation continues.

This is an extensive advantage indeed to the church of Christ, which every believer is a sharer

^{*} Eph. 3. 20.

in, and may assuredly depend upon. Not that they are purely beholden for this benefit to that obligation their spiritual husband is under from this part of his relative character ; but, as I have proved before, there is a natural love, that freely and powerfully inclines him to make his espoused people partners with himself in the enjoyment of what he is, and has, as their mediator. *For in this quality it hath pleased the father that in him should all fulness dwell ;** that all those, who have him for their husband, *might out of his fulness receive, and grace for grace.* § Therefore all these have a right by divine grace to his precious blood to cleanse them from all sin ; a right to his glorious justifying righteousness for their acceptance before God ; to the fulness of his power for defence and supply ; and to the sanctifying influences of his holy spirit to fit them for the ends of his glory here, and their enjoyment of a world of happiness hereafter ; and to add no more, a right to be sharers not only in his honour here, but also in that inheritance of his reserved for them in glory. Hence his people are said to be heirs together with him, † or *heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.* And the same apostle in another place, arguing the believer's title to all good, founds it in his relation to Christ : *Whether Paul, or A-*

* Col. 1. 19. § John 1. 16. † Rom. 8. 17.

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Pollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours, and ye are Christ's.* And to put this truth beyond all doubt, Christ himself declares to his father: *The glory, which thou gavest me, I have given them.*†

From all which it appears, I think, sufficiently evident, that whatever can be supposed of Christ, as mediator; all those who are united to him by faith, and are espoused by him, do and shall share in with him for ever. And tho' all fulness is intrusted in the hands of this heavenly husband, and the crown of honour is put upon his head; yet his spouse has an undoubted right to come in for part of his abundant riches. And as this glory and honour of her covenant head are the particular dignity and lustre of the whole body, so of every single member.

O! who would not desire to be the espoused of Christ, and have their maker and redeemer for their head and husband!

And thus we have considered this character, and inquired into those things, the principal at least, that are necessarily implied in this relation. The comfort arising from hence to every true christian, who has no less a person than his maker for his husband, cannot certainly but bear some pro-

* 1 Cor. 3. 22. † John 17. 22.

portion to that experienced by our departed Friend. Especially if we consider those other glorious titles, as his being *their redeemer, the holy one of Israel, the Lord of hosts, and the God of the whole earth*, as so many additional characters, surrounding this, and casting an eminent beauty and glory upon it; and furnishing, as it were, the church of God with so many conclusive arguments, to establish her faith in a comfortable assurance, that whatever is expected, or can be desired from this endearing relation, Christ is not only able to answer, but certainly will to every one thus espoused by him.

But this brings me to my next general, which I told you would be,

II. To show the ground, or reason, which the people of God have to be assured, that Christ will fully answer to them every thing thus included in the relation of an husband.

What we shall do here, will be little more than a sort of recapitulation; nor indeed is there any thing else necessary: for by establishing the truth of the preceding head, which, I hope, we have already done, we at once also establish this, because the reason for both is the same.

But as the people of God, thro' the various difficulties they have to encounter with, are too subject to unbelief and fears; it may not be amis to offer somewhat under this second head.

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These unbelieving thoughts respecting Christ, under this or any other character, seem to me to arise from the apprehension either of his want of love, or power, or faithfulness; the very thought of which defects plainly betrays a great degree of ignorance both of the perfection of his nature, and the riches of his grace. And to doubt his answering all that is supposed or can be included in this relation, is a plain affront to his holy majesty, and matter of great shame and blushing to such who profess to love and trust him. Therefore it were greatly to be wished, that the dreadful nature, and evil consequences hereof, were better understood and considered by all true christians. On the other hand, from those characters in the text we have all possible reason to conclude, that nothing can be wanting in him, which is necessary to secure to his people all that is included in, or can be expected from such a relation.

And indeed how is it possible that it should be otherwise? Can he want nearness to his people, to interest himself in their common advantage, who is their husband? Can he be without suitable love or affection for them, whom he hath redeemed from wrath to come, and washed from their sins in his own blood? Can he fail of pity or sympathy towards those, whom he has chosen for his peculiar people, and declared that in all *their afflictions he is afflicted*? Will not he, can we suppose, answer the
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the cries, and provide for the necessities of his own spouse, who is in general a *father of the fatherless, and an husband to the widow*? And further, can any doubt, but that he, who is *the Lord of hosts, and the God of the whole earth*, has power sufficient to accomplish his whole pleasure concerning them? Nor can he be once suspected as to his faithfulness in this relation, who, *as the holy one of Israel*, always acted agreeable to his divine nature and word, and abides the *true and faithful witness* for ever. After all this can any imagine, that his spouse shall fail of any necessary degrees of grace here, or fall short of sharing with him in the glories of his kingdom hereafter? Certainly no. These things seem to carry their own evidence along with them, and assure us, that *the work of faith with power* shall be carried on in their hearts of his people, while in this wilderness state, till they are compleatly fitted for the enjoyment of him above, and are actually brought to those mansions, he has prepared for all his chosen. I come now,

III. To make a few reflections by way of improvement.

I. This affords us an admirable instance of the riches of divine grace, and the wonderful condescension of the Son of God, that he should demean himself in such a manner, as not to be ashamed of being stiled an husband to such sinful worms, as the

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the best of his people are. How amazing is this ? *Herein is love* and condescension indeed, unexampled love, that the Lord of glory should place his affections upon such as we, and chuse us for his *own before the foundation of the world*. That the heir of all things should stoop so low, as to take worms of the earth into union with himself, and embrace, with delight sinful men in the arms of his sovereign grace. Should some great earthly potentate leave his palace, and take himself a wife from a cottage of beggars, 'twould surprize and astonish the neighbouring nations. But alas, believer, here is matter of greater wonder than this, what men and angels stand amazed at, and even the whole heavenly host, whose eternal employment it will be to adore this unspeakable grace ! O consider this, all ye redeemed of the Lord, that your hearts may exult in this condescending love, as that which is most sovereign most free !

2. If it be the happiness of all God's people, that their maker is their husband ; how much does it stand us in stead to examine whether we are of this number ? For without some good ground for such a conclusion, we can draw no proper comfort from this truth, whatever we think of our selves. He that is a kind and tender husband to his people, will appear an incensed judge against all those, who live and dye strangers and enemies to him.

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Those, who are espoused to Christ, experience, at some seasons at least, an hearty love to his glorious person, a delight in the contemplation of his divine excellencies, a willingness of mind to give up themselves to him, and dependance upon him for every thing both for time and eternity. They have a true desire after his company, and the greatest pleasure in it. If your consciences therefore testify that you experience these things, there is reason why you should conclude (notwithstanding all your unworthiness) that your maker is your husband; but if not, and you are destitute of true faith in, and love to Christ, your *hope is vain*, and *you are yet in your sins*.

3. Does Christ stand in this relation to his people? This may administer matter of great comfort and joy to them at all times, and under all circumstances. How may a disconsolate widow look with pleasure to Christ, for repairing all the losses she can possibly sustain by the death of the most faithful and affectionate husband? What more can be desired to this end, than that our maker stands in the relation of a loving, tender, faithful, and powerful husband? Such an one may *rejoice in the Lord always*, be the case what it will. This will be a sutable comfort under the sense of sin, for in this case he is *an advocate with the father*. When afflictions press sore upon us, he will *uphold with the right hand of his righteousness*. Are his people in the fire, he'll be with them, and in the water, that shall

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shall not overcome them. So that the believer may say at all times, as *Isaiah* does: *I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, &c.* †

4 If believers are Christ's spouse, how heinous and aggravated must their wilful transgressions be? Indeed the best of men must confess, that their sins are innumerable, by reason of that remainder of corruption which there is in them; and that they stand in daily need of the fresh applications of the blood of sprinkling to their consciences: but then these are what they hate and abhor, when truly themselves. And by how much the more they are assured, that Christ will continue his love, and not cast them off, tho' their transgressions are exceeding numerous; by so much the more under divine influence will they be careful, how they offend this so gracious and kind a Lord, and be desirous to yield him a willing and chearful obedience. So far are the most clear gospel truths from deserving that unjust charge of tending to lead men into sin, and encouraging them therein, that the more men understand them, the more do they hate the *garment spotted with the flesh*.

As wilful sin, therefore, must be contrary to the principle of grace in us, so it must be an high

† *Chap.* 61. 10.

violation of that engagement we are under to be the Lord's, and consequently very provoking to our heavenly husband. Hence the Lord makes it an aggravation of *Israel's* sin, saying: *They brake my covenant, altho' I was an husband to them.**

Consider then, O believers, that as by your espousal to Christ your calling is high, and your honour very great; so also is your obligation to faithfulness equal thereto. Therefore allow yourselves in nothing unworthy of your own dignity, nor the honour of your Lord-redeemer.

5. From the relation believers stand in to Christ we learn, that the most ardent affection is due to him from all his chosen. An ordinary or common love to this spiritual husband is not enough. For his divine perfections call for much more than this. An equal share of our affections to him, with other things, as one observes, would be a crime and a scandal.

6. This also teaches us, how highly it concerns every christian to pay a just regard to all the ordinances of our glorious redeemer, and to take great satisfaction in yielding obedience to him therein. How pleasant is it to a loving and an affectionate wife to wait in those paths, in which her kind and absent spouse had appointed to meet her. By this she duely honours him, and is most likely to an-

* Jer. 31. 32.

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swer the desire of her own mind, which is to see and enjoy her beloved.

All the appointed paths of Christ's feet are glorious, and his spouse may say in all of them, as 'tis in *Canticles*: *'Tis the voice of my beloved*. And indeed she ought to attend in all his ordinances to hear his will, and expect to enjoy his comfortable presence in the appointed season. And give me leave to say, that this will be observed by his people in obedience to him, in some proportion to that sense they have of the relation they bear to their maker, as their spiritual husband. His honour calls for this, and as that communion with him, which is enjoy'd in his appointments, is most sweet to such as have ever tasted of his love; so these will all of them, more or less, desire to wait for him in the ways of his house, and where this care is wanting, there is too much room to suspect their relation.

7. *Lastly*, this relation Christ stands in to his people, calls for their chearful and constant dependance upon him. With what pleasure does a man attend the business of life, in order to supply the call of his family, when his spouse receives the fruit of his care with an air of pleasure and satisfaction; while, on the other hand, an uneasy, murmuring, and dissatisfied countenance and carriage grieve his mind, and in a very great measure

sure render him incapable of pursuing that with pleasure, which was designed for their mutual comfort and happiness.

This heavenly husband indeed will never be unmindful of the good of his church, even in the least degree ; for we are assured that *all things work together for good to them that love him.*

All which should engage our entire dependance upon him in all our affairs, and our chearful acquiescence with him in all the dispensations of his grace and providence. Therefore a doubting and dissatisfied christian dishonours his Lord, and acts very unbecoming his profess'd trust in, and dependance upon him. But for a true christian with becoming pleasure to go through the several difficult paths in this wilderness, *leaning upon the beloved*, is highly commendable, and is both an honour and pleasure to his redeemer.

To conclude, let all such then, whom Christ has espoused to himself, remember, that their lovely bridegroom is hastening apace to fetch them to the possession of those glorious mansions, which he has prepared for all those who love him, and long for his appearing. He'll soon send his messenger death to call their souls into his presence, and order a heavenly band of guardian angels to convey them to his glorious paradise,

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where, how mean and contemptible soever they seem here, they shall appear then with such exalted abilities, as shall enable them to comprehend both natural and divine knowledge in another manner than heretofore. While their bodies shall remain the tender care of an almighty providence, and their dust shall be watchfully kept by virtue of their union to Christ; 'till he comes *who shall change their vile bodies, and fashion them like unto his glorious body.*

And when their glorious Lord shall rise from his throne of government, and come to his seat of judgment, he shall say, "Let the foundations of the earth be loosed, and the heavens be folded together, let the throne be set, and the books be open'd, and arise ye dead and come to judgment." Then shall their bodies be raised, and being immortalized, shining with heavenly beauty, shall with the greatest pleasure re-unite with, and each embrace its glorified soul. And now the happy bride, being thus made ready, shall enter with the bridegroom upon that glorious eternity, which shall be spent in the most delightful discoveries and admiration of divine love; and in the fruition of all glory, felicity and joy, which will be the ultimate result of redeeming grace,

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There the antient of days shall open the book of the divine decrees, unlock the treasures of his council, and unfold the mysteries of his eternal love, and shew to every happy soul what room they had in his heart and thoughts before all ages, O glorious vision!

The delightful marriage is now consummated; the spouse of Christ is now by her Lord brought into his glorious mansions; and the happy bride, the lamb's wife, shall lose sight of him no more for ever. The shadow is fled away, and can ne're return; while this beloved bridegroom shall entertain his spouse upon the delightful everlasting mountain of spices.

May we shew our love to, and desire after these things, by chusing Christ for our Lord and husband, by submitting to his laws, by studying his honour and interest here; and often with pleasure revolve these words in our mind, as our departed friend did: *Thy maker is thy husband, (the Lord of hosts is his name) and thy redeemer the holy one of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall be be called.*

I should here have put an end to this discourse, were it not expected I should say something of the person deceased. What I shall do this way, besides acquainting you in general that she was
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called in her younger days by sovereign and distinguishing grace, to an early knowledge and profession of Christ and his ordinances, and devoted that season of life to religious exercises, which far the greater part of young persons spend in *youthful lusts, which war against the soul*, will be only an instance or two of such things, as I apprehend, worthy our regard and imitation.

And I would observe, in the first place, it being worthy our notice, that tho' she met with particular trials for her profession of Christ, and steady submission to his ordinances; yet she was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, nor afraid to profess it, whatever might be the consequences of it.

Her behaviour in this church of Christ was becoming the profession she made of the gospel. How she filled up other relations, will be better told by those, who justly lament her departure, and will not find it easy, I believe, in many respects to repair that loss.

Those who were most intimate with her, to her praise observed, that she was truly compassionate to the poor and distressed; affectionately concerned for the souls of her churcheless relations, even those of them, who slighted her most on the account of her profession. And as she had herself tasted of divine love and grace, she would frequently recommend it to others in conversation, and speak of
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the worth of an immortal soul in a very sensible and affectionate manner.

She loved family religion so well (which is so miserably neglected by the generality of professors in our day) that, I hope, the younger part of those late under her care will not forget, that concern she expressed for the due discharge of it ; nor the marks of her displeasure towards such, as seem'd to neglect, or behave indecently under the performance of it.

During her long and last indisposition (which perhaps took its first rise from a too great concern for the loss of all her children) I am told, by those who were about her, she discovered much patience and submission to the divine will ; and tho' the apprehension of death was awful to her, and the consciousness of imperfections, together with some darkness of mind with which she was sometimes exercis'd, were attended with some fears ; yet she was seasonably supported and comforted with many *great and precious promises* thro' the whole course of her illness, by which she was enabled for the most part to maintain a lively hope in, and and by faith keep a firm hold of the redeemer. And a little before her departure, being desired, if she had any comfortable hope, to signify it : by the motion of her trembling hand, she then en-

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deavoured to give that satisfaction, which thro' want of speech by words she was incapable of expressing.

May we, who are left behind, find a spirit disposed to those things I have hinted, and experience futable supports under our affliction, and a good degree of hope and joy in our last moments.



FINIS.



E R R A T A.

PAge 10. line 5. read of Israel. p. 18. l. 5. dele much, p. 24. l. 22. r. there might be. p. 29. l. 17. r. the hearts. N. B. In pages 36 and 37, inverted commas should have been placed at the beginning of several lines, but by mistake are omitted.

